

State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana (SSACI)

FAQs about the National Guard Supplemental Grant (NGSG)

Q: What is the difference between Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) and the National Guard Supplemental Grant (NGSG)?

A: FTA and NGSG are separate programs. The Army National Guard FTA is administered by the Guard and is paid directly to the Bursar's Office of the institution. The NGSG is a state grant administered by the State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana (SSACI) and is handled through the institution's Financial Aid Office. Both Air and Army National Guard students are eligible for the NGSG but only Army National Guard students are eligible for the FTA. Questions about the FTA should be directed to the Army Guard.

Q: A student receives the NGSG. Might he or she be eligible for other state grants?

A: Maybe. Depending on financial need, the student could be eligible to receive the Frank O'Bannon Higher Education Award (HEA) in addition to the NGSG. The HEA is unrelated to the Guard. If a student receives an HEA, it is applied before the NGSG, which then is used for any remaining tuition and regularly assessed fees.

Q: Why isn't the NGSG paying 100 percent of a student's tuition and fees?

A: The NGSG will cover *up to* 100 percent of certain tuition and fees. The NGSG covers only regularly assessed fees, which are assessed to all students independent of program. It does not cover special fees such as lab fees. In addition, at institutions that charge by the credit hour, the NGSG only covers tuition up to 15 credit hours per semester. Any charges beyond these limits are the student's responsibility.

Q: A student receives other benefits based on his or her enlistment in the Indiana National Guard such as the GI Bill, VA Benefits or an enlistment "kicker." Does SSACI handle these too?

A: No, SSACI only handles state administered awards such as the NGSG and HEA. The Guard or VA can provide more information regarding other benefits.

Q: A student was called to active duty while in school. What should the student do?

A: The student should speak with his or her academic advisor and the Financial Aid Office *immediately* because institutions have different policies. In most cases, the institution will retroactively withdraw the student from all classes for the term and cancel all tuition and fee charges (and maybe room and board costs too). The student may take an incomplete in all classes, but this option is not advised. At a minimum, the institution will require a copy of the student's orders before any action can be taken. Students should follow the institution's directions completely.

Q: Are there filing deadlines for the state's National Guard Supplemental Grant (NGSG)?

A: Yes. A student must file the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) by March 10th of each year and correct any errors on the FAFSA by May 15th. In addition, each branch of the Guard (Air and Army) has its own paperwork and filing deadlines for the NGSG. Students should check with their education officer or unit commander for more information. Students must satisfy both SSACI and Guard deadlines in order to receive the NGSG.

Q: Are there exceptions to the state FAFSA filing deadlines?

A: Limited exceptions are available. If a student was on active duty (state or federal) during the filing or correction periods and was unable to file or correct the FAFSA, the deadlines may be waived. The student would need to file an appeal with SSACI in order to request a waiver of these deadlines. The appeal should include supporting documentation such as the student's DD214 or orders. More information regarding the appeals process is available online at <http://www.in.gov/ssaci/2565.htm>.

Q: A student was deployed on active duty and indicated veteran status on the FAFSA but the federal government could not verify it. The student received a comment code (codes 161, 162, 173, or 180 are typical) directing him to talk to his institution's Financial Aid Office. What should the student do?

A: The student should take his DD214 to the Financial Aid Office of his institution as soon as possible. If the student meets certain criteria, the institution will verify the student's veteran status and make the student an *independent* student. As an independent student, parental information is not required on the FAFSA. Note that going to basic or advanced training is not sufficient to be declared a veteran.

Q: The institution indicates a student has some state grants but not the NGSG. What should the student do?

A: First, the student should visit <http://www.in.gov/ssaci/estudent/> to see if she has been allocated the NGSG at the institution she is attending currently. If so, the student should print a copy of the award and take it to the Financial Aid Office of the institution. If not, the student should contact her unit commander or readiness resource officer to make sure the Guard has certified her for the NGSG for that term.

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- Q: A student knows that she is eligible for the NGSG but her institution indicates SSACI has not sent the funds to them. What should the student do?**
- A: The institution must claim the grant before funds can be received. SSACI sends grant notices to institutions every week during the academic year. A student should first visit <http://www.in.gov/ssaci/estudent/> to see if the institution she attends is *listed as the first choice college*. If not, the student should follow the instructions to change it immediately. If the institution is listed first and the award was created recently or the student recently changed her college choice, please allow the institution 1 to 2 weeks to receive and respond to the information from SSACI.
- Q: A student received the NGSG in the fall but the institution indicates he is no longer eligible. What should the student do?**
- A: The Guard must re-certify students each term. The student should contact his education officer or unit commander to ensure the Guard re-certified him for the spring term. Without certification each term, the student cannot receive the NGSG. Remember, a student must file a FAFSA and re-apply for the NGSG each year too.
- Q: A student can see that SSACI has awarded him the NGSG, but the institution requires the submission of more documentation. Does the student have to comply with the request?**
- A: Yes. The student may be selected for a process called Verification by the institution or federal government. If selected, the student must submit any requested documentation to the institution by the indicated deadline before any financial aid, including the NGSG, can be claimed. If a student fails to submit the requested documents within the requested timeframe, he can lose his NGSG as well as all other state and federal aid.
- Q: Does a student have to maintain a certain grade point average in order to qualify for the NGSG?**
- A: Yes. The student must meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards as defined by the institution in order to qualify for the NGSG. These standards include a minimum GPA as well as other criteria. For example, an institution may require a student to pass a minimum number of credit hours. An institution should be able to provide a copy of its SAP standards. An institution cannot claim the NGSG on a student's behalf if he or she has failed to meet these standards.
- Q: A student received a state grant before she joined the Guard. How will that impact her eligibility for the NGSG now?**
- A: A student may receive up to eight semesters (or equivalent) of state financial aid. Any state aid received prior to joining the Guard and becoming eligible for the NGSG will reduce the amount of NGSG eligibility available. In addition, if the student first enrolled for the 2011-2012 academic year or thereafter, she must use her state grant eligibility within eight years of the date state financial aid was first used.
- Q: Can a student receive the NGSG if he attends the institution part-time?**
- A: Yes. The NGSG can be used for part-time enrollment as well as full-time enrollment. Students should consult the institution's Financial Aid Office about using the NGSG for part-time enrollment.
- Q: A student is in the Guard and is a Twenty-first Century Scholar. Can the student receive both grants at the same time?**
- A: No. Both the Twenty-first Century Scholarship and the NGSG cover the same tuition so a student may only receive one. As a rule, if the student is enrolled full-time, he or she will receive the Twenty-first Century Scholarship. *If the student is enrolled part-time*, he or she should contact SSACI to have the Twenty-first Century Scholarship temporarily deactivated and the NGSG activated because only the NGSG can be used for part-time enrollment. (Note: In order to maintain eligibility for the Twenty-first Century Scholarship, the student must file a FAFSA each year after high school graduation and matriculate to college within two years of high school graduation.)
- Q: Will a student receive his NGSG as soon as the Guard certifies him as eligible?**
- A: It may take a few weeks for SSACI to process the student's information from the Guard and notify the institution. In addition, SSACI may need more information from the student's institution before the grant can be created. For example, at institutions with different tuitions for new and continuing students, SSACI must know the student's status. Students should first check the status of their grants online at <http://www.in.gov/ssaci/estudent/> and then with their institution's Financial Aid Office.
- Q: Can a student use the NGSG in the summer? Can the NGSG be used for just one term a year?**
- A: No, the NGSG is not available for summer 2012 though the availability of funds will dictate the availability of the award for future summer terms. Students can use the NGSG one term at a time. Please note, a student still has to file and correct the FAFSA each year by the state deadlines. If the student first enrolled for the 2011-2012 academic year or thereafter, he or she must use the eight semesters of state grant eligibility within eight years of the date the state financial aid was first used.